

Torah Teachings

Biblical Definitions: “Sin”

Source: “*Messiah – Volume I – Understanding His Life and Teachings In Hebraic Context*” by Avi Ben Mordechai

NOTE: I have added my comments in square brackets as such [].

SIN

Along the same lines, the word “sin” can be defined as nothing more than falling short of righteousness and faithfulness to the Words of G-d, the Torah.

In the Bible, the word “sin” is from the Hebrew word חָטָא (*chata*), Strong’s number 2398. Its primary definition is to—

- Miss the way, go wrong, incur guilt.

In the *B’rit Chadashah*, the counterpart to the Hebrew *chata* is the Greek *hamartia*, Strong’s number 266. The *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* defines the term this way:

- To miss the mark.
- To err, be mistaken.
- To miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor.
- To wander from the Law of God, violate God’s Law, sin.

In the context of the *Tanakh*, we find that the following passages support the idea that to sin means to fall short of walking according to G-d’s life-giving commandments:

With all my heart I have sought Thee; do not let me wander from Thy commandments. Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee. (Mizmor (Psalm) 119:10-11) [Emphasis mine]

Now if a person sins and does any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, though he was unaware, still he is guilty, and shall bear his punishment. (Vayikrah (Leviticus) 5:17) [Emphasis mine]

From the ancient Jewish work, 2 Esdras 15:22-24, (*the Apocrypha*) we have a stinging definition of sin and its connection to Torah violation

My right hand shall not spare the sinner, and my sword shall not cease over them that shed innocent blood upon the earth. The fire is gone forth from his wrath, and hath consumed the foundations of the earth, and the sinner, like the straw that is kindled. Woe to them that sin, and keep not my commandments! saith the Lord.

The following is from the book of the Kings of Israel:

But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law (Torah) of the Lord, the God of Israel, with all his heart; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel sin. (Melechim bet [2 Kings] 10:31) [Emphasis mine]

With the definition of sin (falling short of obeying the divine Instructions of G-d revealed in the Torah) put back into its rightful Hebraic context, *B'rit Chadashah* passages like the following can be understood correctly:

Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (Mattitayhu [Matthew] 18:21-22) [Emphasis mine]

The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Yochanan [John] 1:29) [Emphasis mine]

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. (Yochanan [John] 15:22) [Emphasis mine]

In the passage above (Yochanan [John] 15:22), there can be no mistake made concerning the earthly ministry of Y'shua [Yeshua/Jesus] and the Torah. He came to deliver the Mosaic commandments of G-d ("the Word"). He did not replace G-d's words, nor did He alter them. He simply taught them with accuracy so no one could hide behind an excuse, saying, "*I did not know what G-d said or meant.*" From *B'eresith* (Genesis) to the book of Revelation in the *B'rit Chadashah*, the message is the same: Sin is falling short of obeying the commandments of G-d given to Moshe and the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. However, thanks be to G-d that He has filled us with power to live by His words¹ and has given us mercy, favor, understanding, illumination, and light through Mashiach Y'shua [Messiah Yeshua/Jesus]:

(G-d to Moshe): I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (D'varim [Deuteronomy] 18:18) [Emphasis mine]

(Y'shua to His Father): For the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them and they received them, and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me... Sanctify them in the truth Thy word (Torah) is truth. (Yochanan [John] 17:8, 17) [Emphasis mine]

I hope this sheds some light upon the Biblical definition of "Sin" compared to what man has defined "Sin" to be. It makes a big difference when we use the Bible as our dictionary. Especially the Old Covenant/Testament since the New Covenant/Testament did not exist at the time Yeshua/Jesus was here.

Shalom,

One Crying In The Wilderness

www.Torah-Truths.com

¹ Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) 11:19-20, 36:27; Yochanan [John] 16:13.